

Net Metering Task Force Framing Memorandum

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum provides an overview of key issues and considerations about the work plan and timeline for the Net Metering Task Force. Our Task Force has limited time and must achieve substantial deliverables. It is with the goal of moving us all forward as quickly and efficiently as possible that we have created this initial document to help frame our work. The legislation that establishes the Task Force, Section 7 of Chapter 251 of the Acts of 2014 states, in part:

(a) There shall be a net metering task force established to review the long-term viability of net metering and develop recommendations on incentives and programs to support the deployment of 1600 MW of solar generation facilities in the commonwealth.

(b) The task force shall assess and report to the legislature on the costs and benefits of the existing net metering framework from the perspectives of the customer-generator, non-participating ratepayers and the citizens of the commonwealth at large.

The task force shall review incentive programs offered in other states, including standard offer, declining block incentives and competitive procurements and shall also include in its findings an analysis on the impact of a minimum bill, paid by all ratepayers in all rate classes, as a mechanism to support a reliable electric distribution system.

It is with this charge in mind that we discuss the goals of the task force.

II. TASK FORCE GOALS

Any policy we consider must achieve the 1600 megawatt (“MW”) solar goal. The language in the legislation regarding “costs and benefits” is not intended for us to evaluate the costs and benefits of achieving this 1600 MW goal, but directs us to consider the relative costs and benefits of policy options to achieve the goal, as well as the overall cost and benefits of the existing net metering framework from the perspective of multiple customer groups.

The legislation seeks a long term solution and program for solar incentives and net metering in the Commonwealth. Solar incentive programs and net metering have worked in tandem, to support well over 650 MW of solar development. Any new program must continue this development, to 1,600 MW and provide opportunity for additional development, while providing additional transparency, predictability, cost savings, and fairness to ratepayers in all rate classes.

III. FOCUSING OUR WORK

A. Proposed Consultant Analysis

The task force has the ability to engage a consultant to provide important analysis for our work. Given the time constraints and legislative requirements, we propose that the focus of the consultant work be the following, as further outlined in the attached consultant scope of work: (1) summarize the incentive programs offered in other states including but not limited to standard offer, declining block incentives and competitive procurements ; (2) provide a representative analysis of the level of solar development in states that do not have an incentive program (3) analyze the costs and benefits of current Massachusetts net metering and solar incentive policy and compare to other policies from the perspective of groups including but not limited to the customer-generator, non-participating ratepayers and citizens of the commonwealth at large ; ; (4) provide recommendations for appropriate structures for providing the support to reach the 1600 MW goal; and (5) complete a survey of the range of minimum bills programs from across the country.

B. Proposed Task Force Work/Deliverables

The co-chairs propose the following responsibilities for the Task Force: (1) the Task Force will meet monthly, approximately seven times (from October 2014 to March 2015) and additional times as the co-chairs determine necessary; (2) establish subcommittees as needed; (3) vote on and prepare proposed draft recommendations (and alternatives for areas where there is no consensus); (4) review consultant drafts/proposals and analysis; (5) draft recommendations to the legislature; and (6) host at least two public meetings in different geographical areas of Massachusetts.

IV. PROPOSED TIMELINE FOR TASK FORCE

11/13/14 – **First Task Force Meeting:** (1) discuss framing document and adopt ground rules; (2) discuss timeline; (3) discuss and approve consultant scope of work.

11/14/14 – Issue consultant RFP.

12/1/14 – Deadline to receive proposals.

12/8/14 – Co-chairs select consultant.

12/15/14 – **Second Task Force Meeting:** meet with consultant, answer consultant's questions and discuss any of the consultant's initial findings. Consultants begin meeting offline with Task Force Members to gather input.

1/6/15 – **Third Task Force Meeting:** First public comment meeting and solicitation of written public comments.

Mid-February – **Fourth Task Force Meeting:** Consultant first draft of report presented, answer questions, and solicits stakeholder input on draft report and recommendations.

Mid-Later February: **Fifth Task Force Meeting:** Second public comment meeting and solicitation of written public comments on first draft.

No later than March 15 – **Sixth Task Force Meeting:** Second draft of report due from consultants and presented to Task Force. Corrections proposed.

Late March – **Seventh Task Force Meeting:** Deadline for final consultant report which integrates public input and Task Force recommendations and vote on final report.

3/31/15 – Submit report and recommendations to the legislature.

Note: All task force meetings will be open to the public. Per the participations rules established in the bylaws, members of the public who attend task force meetings will be allowed to express their opinions and make suggestions at appropriate junctures, as time allows and as determined by the Co-Chairs. In addition, two task force meetings will be dedicated to public comment.

